

THE NEST AND EGGS OF THE YELLOW-WHISKERED BUSH-TANAGER (*CHLOROSPINGUS PARVIROSTRIS*) IN EASTERN ECUADOR

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El nido y huevos del Clorospingo Bigotudo (*Chlorospingus parvirostris*) en el Este del Ecuador.

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The genus *Chlorospingus* contains around 9-11 species of rather dull-colored, medium-sized tanagers ranging from central Mexico to northern Argentina (Isler & Isler 1987, 1999; Dickinson 2003). Described nests are open cups hidden inside clumps of mosses or epiphytes, sometimes on the ground (Worth 1939, Rowley 1966, Edwards 1967, Skutch 1967, Hilty & Brown 1986, reviewed in Isler & Isler 1999, Christian 2001, Strewe 2001). Here I report on six nests of the Yellow-whiskered Bush-Tanager (*Chlorospingus parvirostris*) studied at Hacienda San Isidro next to the Yanayacu Biological Station & Center for Creative Studies (00°35.95S, 77°53.40W) in Napo Province, northeastern Ecuador.

Observations were carried out from September 2001 to September 2004. All nests were found immediately adjacent to small streams inside primary cloud forest, at elevations ranging from 1950 to 2100 m. All were located at sites where moist, mossy rock faces

(2-8 m high) bordered the streams. Nests were situated 0.4 to 2.5 m up (Mean \pm SD = 1.85 \pm 1 m) on sheltered rock ledges (5) or supported by tangled vegetation resting against the cliff face (1). They were large but neatly maintained, shallow mossy cups, thickly lined with red-brown tree fern (Cyathaceae) scales. Measurements at one nest were: cup inside diameter 9.5 cm, cup depth 4 cm, outside width 15 cm, and total height 8.5 cm. Five of the six active nests had been built (on top of) upon up to five old nests, suggesting high nest-site fidelity.

Streams were visited at least monthly during the period of study, allowing for assessments of seasonality in breeding activity through the year. Nests with incubation underway were found in February (1), September (2), November (1), and December (1). Clutch size in each case was two and average measurements for nine eggs (\pm SD) were 22.3 \pm 0.7 x 16.1 \pm 0.4 (range = 21.7 to 23.8 by

15.5 to 16.8 mm). Eggs were pale salmon to buff-white with faded red-brown and lavender flecking and speckling, heaviest at the larger end. Additionally, I found a nest under construction in November, and observed a dependent fledgling in May. As the rainy season is roughly January to June in this area, these dates suggest that most breeding activity occurs during the drier months, but that nesting extends at least partially into the wet season.

The nest and eggs described here closely match those for other species of *Chlorospingus* (Worth 1939, Rowley 1966, Edwards 1967, Skutch 1967, Hilty & Brown 1986, Isler & Isler 1999). However, contrary to Ridgely & Greenfield (2001), but in concordance with Weske (1972 in Isler & Isler 1987), Yellow-whiskered Bush Tanagers in our area are usually found associated with streams (M. Lysinger pers. com.). Despite extensive nest searching in the area, nests have been found only in association with streams, suggesting a preference for this microhabitat in our area. I hope this brief note encourages others to publish their observations on this and other increasingly threatened Neotropical species.

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